



GENESEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONERS

September 13, 2019

BRYANT NOLDEN
DISTRICT 1

Genesee County Retirees,

BRENDA CLACK
DISTRICT 2

Retiree healthcare has been a heated topic since rumors started earlier this year that the Board of County Commissioners was planning to eliminate the benefit as a result of anticipated budget shortfalls.

ELLEN ELLENBURG
VICE-CHAIR
DISTRICT 3

Let me be clear, on behalf of the entire Board of County Commissioners, retiree healthcare has been fully funded in the upcoming budget and we are actively searching for options to continue the benefit into the future as promised.

KIM COURTS
DISTRICT 4

Maintaining this course will be no easy task. The cost of providing health care to both retirees and active employees continues to rise year after year while our tax revenue has not kept pace. At our current rate, over 1/3 of our budget, \$33 million of our \$100 million general fund budget, goes to pay for retiree healthcare, active employee healthcare and active employee retirement costs. Before one service is offered to residents or one employee receives a paycheck, 1/3 of our money is already spent. This year's budget includes many difficult decisions, including layoffs of staff, in order to meet our obligations.

MARK YOUNG
DISTRICT 5

Every member of this Board is committed to finding a sustainable path forward. We have engaged with a firm that specializes in reducing healthcare costs, Plante Moran, to help us find a way to do just that. While we clearly understand the importance of healthcare for the families of our retirees, we continue to have the responsibility to carry out constitutionally and statutorily mandated services for residents of this county.

SHAUN SHUMAKER
DISTRICT 6

We are committed to having discussions and making decisions in the open, so everyone can be engaged in the process. While our online presence has been a bit sketchy in the past, this Board recently voted to upgrade our video and sound capabilities so the public can participate both in person and remotely. We have set up an email list, veba@co.genesee.mi.us, where retirees and residents can get copies of agendas and back up material prior to the meetings so they have the same information that we have. We created a dedicated link on our website that has links to meeting information specifically about this VEBA process. We are utilizing social media (see the Genesee County Board of Commissioners on Facebook) to help notify people of upcoming meetings. We are also open to suggestions. If you have a suggestion on how we can be more open during this process, please email us and let us know. We want to hear from you.

MARTIN COUSINEAU
DISTRICT 7

TED HENRY
BOARD CHAIR
DISTRICT 8

DAVID MARTIN
DISTRICT 9

Every Commissioner understands the stress that these discussions cause people. That is really what we are talking about here, the quality of life that our retirees expect. This issue is too important for you to rely on rumors and misinformation. If you want to know what this Board is doing, engage in the process personally. You'll see firsthand, without the need to rely on second-hand rumor, the decisions that we are making and you'll be able to give valuable input into the process. You deserve to know the facts and we believe that we have afforded you the opportunity to do just that.

On behalf of the entire Board of County Commissioners,

Ted Henry, Chairman

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